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Art's Tribute

To

Shakespeare

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By LORAIN PRATT IMMEN

MICHIGAN



Part First

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Dedicated to the

L. L. C. Shakespeare
Study Group,

Grand Rapids, Michigan,

By
Its Chairman.



Stratford on Avon The Birthplace Home & Grave of Shakespeare



“Yea, he,
The pride of England, glistened like a star,
And beckoned us to Stratford.’”



SO WITH me in memory, on a lovely day in September, 1883, to the garden of England situated in the heart of Warwickshire where the Avon flows downward to the Severn, to the birth and burial place of the immortal Shakespeare, Stratford on Avon, to Henley Street where stands the house where he was born, up the narrow oak stairs into the low roofed birth room, which receives its only light from a large window, the small panes of which are covered with penciled and inked autographs of famous men and women.

Passing the later home, New Place, we walk through the churchyard thickly strewn with graves, to the gray walls of the perpendicular Gothic structure, with its Norman six sided spire and tower with fretted battlements—Holy Trinity church. We enter, examine the vellum Register Book, pausing at “W. Shakespeare, son of J. S. Baptized 26th of April, 1564,” then pass into the church proper, where it is impossible fully to describe the sense of peace that falls on the soul of the traveler as through the eastern window of the chancel he sees “the sunshine stream in upon the grave of Shakespeare and gild his bust

upon the wall above it." I would ask you to place your hand on the gray stone with the epitaph,

**"GOOD FREND *for* JESVS SAKE FORBEARE,
To-DIGG *the* DVST ENCLOASED HEARE:
BLES'E *be ye* MAN *yt* SPARES THES STONES,
And CVRST *be* HE *yt* MOVES MY BONES,"**

that you might perhaps catch a little inspiration better to understand the depth of the mines of thoughts he has left us.

"Shakespeare!

The great master of the maxims of life and conduct."


—*Daniel Webster.*

"The world is a dictionary of the mind. Language is but a multitude of pictures. Every brain is a gallery of art and every soul is to a greater or less degree an artist. To express desires, longings, ecstasies, prophecies and passions in form and color, to put love, hope, heroism and triumph in marble, to paint dreams and memories with words, to portray the purity of dawn, glory of noon, tenderness of twilight, splendor and mystery of night with sounds, to enrich the common things of earth with gems and jewels of the mind—this is art."

Not alone have the great musical composers paid their tribute to Shakespeare in operas and musical settings of his songs, but artists, with their magic brushes glowing with color, upon their beloved canvas have painted scenes of the dramas that will long delight the eye and feast the soul. English, French, German and American painters have paid in art their tribute, a few of which we have placed in part first of the six to be issued pertaining to Shakespeare.

"Hamlet is the greatest creation in literature
that I know of, though there may be else-
where finer scenes and passages of poetry."

—*Tennyson.*

RINCE HAMLET leaves Wittenburg, upon hearing of his father's death, and returns to his home at Elsinore to find his mother hastily married to his uncle Claudius, who has contrived to be elected King of Denmark. Hamlet's friend Horatio tells him of meeting Hamlet's father's ghost, and the next evening Hamlet goes with Horatio to the portico of the palace, accompanied by Marcellus, to see if he, too, cannot meet the spirit of his father. He succeeds in doing so and promises him that his uncle shall be punished for his murder.

Carl Von Haften has given us a magnificent conception of Elsinore, with its castle, stormy sky, dashing waves, upon the night that Hamlet first meets his father's ghost :

HAM. The air bites shrewdly : it is very cold. What
hour now ?

HOR. I think it lacks twelve. Look, my lord, it comes !

* * *



ELSINORE.

HAM. I will speak to thee ; I'll call thee Hamlet, King,
father, royal Dane : O answer me !
Let me not burst in ignorance ; but tell
Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements :
It will not speak : then I will follow it. It waves
me still * * * speak ; I'll go no further.

GHOST. I am thy father's spirit. * * * Brief let me be.--
Sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,
And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leperous distilment ; whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man
That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body ;
And with a sudden vigour it does posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood : so did it mine :
Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, of Queen, at once dispatch'd ,
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhousell'd, disappointed, unanel'd ;
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head.
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not ;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.
Adieu ! Remember me.



PLAYERS' SCENE.

HAM. Hold, hold, my heart ;
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up.— Remember thee !
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. * * *
Now to my word ;
It is, 'Adieu, adieu ! Remember me !'
I have sworn't.

Conrad Diehl's conception of the Players' Scene is superior to the one by Abbey at the Paris Exposition of 1900.

HAM. Speak the speech I pray you as I pronounced it
to you, trippingly on the tongue.

(Room in the Castle. Enter King, Queen and Others.)

HAM. to OPH. They're coming to the play ; I must be
idle, get you a place.

(Play proceeds, the poison is poured into the sleeper's ears.)

HAM. to OPH. He poisons him i' the garden for's estate.
His name's Gonzago : you shall see anon how the
murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

OPH. The King rises.

HAM. What, frightened with false fire ?

QUEEN. How fare's my lord ?

KING. Give me some light ! Away !

HAM. Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play ;
For some must watch, while some must sleep,
Thus runs the world away.



OPHELIA.

By the prearranged theatrical performance Hamlet convicts his uncle of the murder. Hamlet loves Polonius' daughter, but, absorbed in the wrongs done to his father, neglects her. This, together with Hamlet's unintentional killing of her father, drives her insane. She is accidentally drowned.

Ferd. Piloty, born in Munich in 1828, a history and genre painter, has painted a perfect picture of Ophelia—mark how closely he has kept to the description given by the Queen to Ophelia's brother, Laertes :

QUEEN. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream :
There with fantastic garlands did she come,
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies. and long purples,
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:
There, on the pendant boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook.

Laertes and Hamlet met at Ophelia's grave, later Hamlet stabs and kills the King, and the Queen drinks of the poisoned cup by mistake and dies. In a fight between Hamlet and Laertes the latter is wounded and dying says : "Exchange forgivenesses with me, noble Hamlet." Hamlet drinks some of the poison in the cup and dies.

"The rest is silence."

THE AMERICAN DRAMA, THE TEMPEST.


“Fetch dew from the still vexed Bermoothes.”

“O, brave New World, that has such people in’t.”

“This drama, the latest of Shakespeare’s writings, carved out of the poet’s own ideal stock and one of Shakespeare’s perfectest works.”

—Hudson.

A play that makes for righteousness.

N AN island of the sea, in a cave hewn out of solid rock, lived Prospero and his beautiful daughter Miranda, he spending his time (by his knowledge of astrology and magic) releasing many good spirits which had been enchanted by the witch Sycorax, who died shortly before he came to the island; Ariel was one and Caliban another of the spirits. When Miranda was fifteen years old her father believed her education complete and wished to have her settled in life and return to the world that he, with her, had been so long separated from.

Ruling the winds and waves, he raises a storm and contrives that a ship returning from Tunis to Naples, containing Alonso, King of Naples, and his son Ferdinand, the King’s brother Sebastian, his usurping brother Antonio and good Gonzalo, shall be wrecked on this island.



STORM SCENE.

While the storm is raging he tells Miranda the story of their lives. Finally he meets and forgives his brother Antonio for usurping his dukedom. Miranda and Ferdinand love and all return to Prospero's native land, where after their arrival the nuptials of the lovers are celebrated and "honor, riches, marriage-blessings" await them.

The tempest is this world in miniature and begins in storm and apparent chaos. G. Romney, born in Lancashire 1734, died 1802, a painter, who painted with few colors, with exceeding grace and sentiment and great breadth of treatment, painted the first scene of this drama.

ANT. Mercy on us ! We split, we split !—
Farewell, my wife and children !
Farewell, brother !

MIR. If by your art, my dearest father, you have
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.
O ! I have suffered
With those that I saw suffer !

PROS. Be collected ;
There's no harm done,
Sit down ;
For thou must now know further.
Twelve years since, Miranda, twelve years since,
Thy father was the Duke of Milan * * *
And thou a princess and only heir.

* * * To my younger brother Antonio I entrusted
my affairs of state, and devoted myself in retirement to profound study. My brother, deeming
himself the duke, with aid of Alonso, King of

Naples, a foe of mine, effected my downfall, carried us on board a ship and when out at sea forced us into a small boat without sail or mast, but my good lord Gonzalo had hidden water and provisions on board and some of my invaluable books ; our food lasted until we landed on this island, and ever since my pleasure has been to instruct my darling child. This tempest I have raised so that by accident the King of Naples and your treacherous uncle might be brought to this shore.

MIR. Alack, what trouble
Was I then to you !

PROS. O, a cherubin
Thou wast that did preserve me ! Thou didst smile,
Infused with a fortitude from Heaven,
When I have deck'd the sea with drops full salt,
Under my burden groan'd ; which rais'd in me
An undergoing stomach, to bear up
Against what should ensue.

Ariel brings Ferdinand to Prospero and seeing him
Miranda asks :

“ What is't ? A spirit ?
I might call him
A thing divine ; for nothing natural
I ever saw so noble.”

And Ferdinand :

“O, if a virgin,
And your affection not gone forth,
I'll make you
The Queen of Naples.”

Prospero says :

“Soft, sir ! one word more.—
(Aside). They are both in either's powers ; but
this swift business
I must uneasy make, lest too light winning
Make the prize light.”

Prospero then imposes severe duties upon him.

The beautiful love scene between Ferdinand and Miranda is painted by William Kaulbach, 1805-1874, the star of contemporary German art.

FERD. There be some sports are painful, and their labour
Delight in them sets off ;
This my mean task
Would be as heavy to me as 'tis odious, but
The mistress which I serve quickens what's dead,
And makes my labours pleasures :
O, she is
Ten times more gentle than her father's crabbed,
And he's compos'd of harshness.
I must remove
Some thousands of these logs and pile them up,
Upon a sore injunction.



LOVERS' SCENE.

MIR. Alas, now, pray you
Work not so hard. I would the lightning had
Burnt up those logs that you are enjoined to pile !
Pray, set it down and rest you :
If you'll sit down,
I'll bear your logs the while ; pray give me that ;
I'll carry it to the pile.
It would become me
As well as it does you ; and I should do it
With much more ease ; for my good will is to it,
And yours 'tis 'gainst.

FERD. No, precious creature ;
I had rather crack my sinews, break my back,
Than you should such dishonour undergo,
While I sit lazy by.

MIR. * * * I do not know
One of my sex ; nor have I seen
More that I may call men than you,
And my dear father, but—
* * * I would not wish
Any companion in the world but you.
Do you love me ?

FERD. Beyond all limit of what else i' the world,
Do love, prize, honor you.

PROS. (In the distance). So glad of this as they, I can
not be,
Who are surprised withal, but my rejoicing
At nothing can be more.



PROSPERO AND LOVERS.

Joseph Wright (Eng., 1754 - 1796), who equaled Wilson in portrait painting and was a rival of Gainsborough, painted Scene 1 in Act IV.

If I have too austere^{ly} punish'd you,
Your compensation makes amends, for I
Have given you here a third of mine own life,
Or that for which I live; who once again
I tender to thy hand; all thy vexations
Were but my trials of thy love; and thou
Hast strangely stood the test; here, afore Heaven,
I ratify this my rich gift. O Ferdinand,
Do not smile at me that I boast her off,
For thou shalt find she will outstrip all praise
And make it halt behind her.

* * *

Then, as my gift and thine own acquisition
Worthily purchas'd, take my daughter.

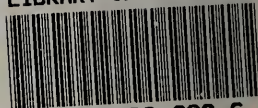
May Ferdinand always care for Miranda as tenderly
in wifehood as her dear noble father Prospero did in baby-
hood, childhood and young womanhood.



“Of all say'd yet, I wish thee happiness.”—Pericles.



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